

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer-implemented method for routing data traffic in a network having a plurality of network layers including an application layer, the method comprising:

5 receiving the data traffic;

selecting one of a plurality of routing options for the data traffic with reference to information associated with the application layer; and

routing the data traffic according to the selected routing option.

10 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the data traffic has been redirected from an original destination according to a caching protocol.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the data traffic comprises a request from a source platform to a destination platform.

15 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the data traffic comprises a response to a request, the request being from a source platform to a destination platform.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising parsing the information associated  
20 with the application layer.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the information comprises a URL associated with the data traffic.

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7. The method of claim 6 wherein the information comprises a suffix associated with the URL.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein parsing the information comprises  
5 determining whether the suffix associated with the URL indicates one of a plurality of MIME types.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the plurality of MIME types comprises \*.gif, \*.jpg, \*.pdf, \*.mpX, and \*.htm.

10. The method of claim 5 wherein parsing the information comprises  
10 determining whether the data traffic relates to ascii or binary data objects.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein selecting one of the plurality of options  
15 comprises setting one of a plurality of socket options for the data traffic.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the plurality of socket options include a first link and a second link, the first link socket option being selected for a first type of data traffic and the second link socket option being selected for a second type of data traffic.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the first and second links comprise land and satellite links, respectively.

14. The method of claim 12 wherein the first and second types of data comprise  
25 ascii and binary data, respectively.

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15. A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having computer program instructions stored therein for implementing the method of claim 1.

5 16. A computer-implemented method for routing data traffic in a network which has been redirected to a network cache, the method comprising:

receiving the data traffic with the network cache;

selecting one of a plurality of routing options for the data traffic with reference to information about the data traffic accessible by the network cache; and

10 routing the data traffic according to the selected routing option.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the information relates to whether a data object associated with the data traffic is cacheable.

15 18. The method of claim 16 wherein the information relates to whether the data traffic comprises a forced reload.

19. A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having computer program instructions stored therein for implementing the method of claim 16.

20 20. A computer-implemented method for routing data traffic in a network having a plurality of layers including physical, data link, and network layers, the method comprising:

receiving the data traffic;

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selecting one of a plurality of routing options for the data traffic with reference to information outside of the physical, data link, and network layers; and routing the data traffic according to the selected routing option.

5           21.     A network cache for operating in a network having a plurality of layers including an application layer, comprising:

cache memory for storing a plurality of objects; and

an operating system which is operable to:

receive redirected data traffic;

10           select one of a plurality of routing options for the data traffic with reference to information associated with the application layer; and

route the data traffic according to the selected routing option.

22.     A network cache, comprising:

15           cache memory for storing a plurality of objects; and

an operating system which is operable to:

receiving redirected data traffic;

select one of a plurality of routing options for the data traffic with reference to information about the data traffic accessible by the network cache; and

20           route the data traffic according to the selected routing option.

23.     A network cache for operating in a network having a plurality of layers including physical, data link, and network layers, comprising:

cache memory for storing a plurality of objects; and

25           an operating system which is operable to:

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receive redirected data traffic;

select one of a plurality of routing options for the data traffic with reference to information outside of the physical, data link, and network layers; and

route the data traffic according to the selected routing option.